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SPECIAL EMBASSY PROGRAM

UNCLAS STATE 183105

BEIJING PASS CHENGDU

E.O. 12356: R/A
TAGS: OPRC, CH
SUBJECT: SECRETARY BAKER'S 6/8 COMMENTS ON CHINA

1. IN HIS APPEARANCE BEFORE THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB 6/8, SECRETARY BAKER MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON CHINA:

2. QUESTION: WHAT IS OUR VIEW OF ETHNIC DISTURBANCES IN THE SOVIET UNION?

SECRETARY BAKER: WELL, I THINK THOSE ARE RATHER SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS FOR THE LEADERSHIP. THEY HAVE SUGGESTED AS MUCH, RECOGNIZED THEM AS SUCH. OUR VIEW, OF COURSE, IS THAT WE STAND FOR FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY, THE RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH, THE RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY. I THINK THAT PRETTY WELL ANSWERS YOUR QUESTION.

WE'D LIKE TO SEE REFORM GO FORWARD IN THE SOVIET UNION. WE TAKE NOTE OF THE FACT THAT, TO SOME EXTENT, THE POLITICAL REFORM PROCESS IN THE SOVIET UNION MAY BE A BIT AHEAD OF THE ECONOMIC REFORM PROCESS. THEY HAVE GOT SOME MAJOR, MAJOR STEPS TO TAKE TO FIND THEIR WAY TO A MARKET ECONOMY.

I THINK THAT PERHAPS WE'VE SEEN SOMEWHAT THE REVERSE IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, WHERE THE ECONOMIC REFORMS GOT PUT IN FRONT OF THE POLITICAL REFORMS. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT DEMOCRATIC REFORM, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC SHOULD PROCEED APACE...

3. QUESTION: IF WE COULD SWITCH REGIONS OF THE WORLD FOR A MOMENT, WHO'S IN CHARGE IN CHINA?

SECRETARY BAKER: WELL, LET ME SUGGEST TO YOU THAT WE HAVE SEEN VARIOUS REPORTS ABOUT WHO'S IN CHARGE. I THINK IT'S TOO SOON, AND THE SITUATION IS TOO CLOUDED NOW FOR US TO ANSWER THAT DEFINITIVELY BY SUGGESTING NAMES -- THROWING NAMES OUT THERE FOR YOU.

THE CHINESE THEMSELVES, AT THIS POINT IN TIME, ARE NOT SHEDDING A LOT OF LIGHT ON THIS, WHICH I THINK IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE FACT THAT THERE IS A POWER STRUGGLE GOING ON IN CHINA.

4. QUESTION: ARE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS BEING CONSIDERED AS A WAY TO BRING PRESSURE ON CHINA, AND CAN YOU RULE OUT SPECIFICALLY THE USE OF A GRAIN EMBARGO?

SECRETARY BAKER: WELL, THE PRESIDENT, IN ANNOUNCING THE ACTION THAT HE TOOK SEVERAL DAYS AGO WITH RESPECT TO MILITARY SALES AND THE EXCHANGE OF VISITS BETWEEN MILITARY ADVISERS, SAID THAT HE RESERVED THE RIGHT TO REVIEW ALL OPTIONS AS THE SITUATION WARRANTS. FOR THE TIME BEING, HE HAS DETERMINED THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAINTAIN THE ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS THAT EXIST NOW.

IN LARGE PART, I SAID A MOMENT AGO THAT I THOUGHT THE REFORM PROCESS IN CHINA, THE ECONOMIC PART, GOT OUT A LITTLE AHEAD OF THE POLITICAL PART. BUT IN LARGE PART, THOSE ECONOMIC REFORMS ARE WHAT HAVE LED TO THE OPENING UP THAT WE SAW BEFORE THIS RECENT TRAGIC AND UNFORTUNATE AND DEPLORABLE CRACKDOWN.

SO, WE THINK IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE MAINTAIN, IF WE CAN -- DEPENDING UPON WHAT HAPPENS AND DEPENDING UPON THE FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS THERE -- THAT WE MAINTAIN THESE ECONOMIC TIES, BECAUSE THOSE ARE THE THINGS THAT FOR THE MOST PART HAVE LED TO A MOVE TOWARD OPENNESS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. BUT THE PRESIDENT DOES RESERVE HIS OPTIONS WITH RESPECT TO ALL THESE MATTERS.

5. QUESTION: IF, AS IT NOW APPEARS, THE HARBINERS ARE TAKING CHARGE IN BEIJING, WILL YOU HAND BACK MR. FANG, THE DISSIDENT NOW IN THE U.S. EMBASSY, IF ASKED TO DO SO?

SECRETARY BAKER: MR. FANG IS IN THE EMBASSY WHERE HE TOOK REFUGE FOR PERSONAL SAFETY REASONS. WE NEVER DISCUSS QUESTIONS INVOLVING THE ISSUE OF ASYLUM, AND I WILL NOT DISCUSS THAT NOW. LET ME SIMPLY SAY THAT HE ASKED FOR REFUGE IN OUR EMBASSY AND WE GRANTED THAT REFUGE. WE WILL BE MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY HIS WISHES IN THIS REGARD.

6. QUESTION: IN RETROSPECT, WAS THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BEIJING SLOW IN BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF EVACUATING AMERICANS FROM BEIJING AND OTHER PARTS OF CHINA?

SECRETARY BAKER: NO, I REALLY DON'T THINK SO. I THINK, FRANKLY, THAT WE WERE RIGHT ON THE MARK, IF I MIGHT SUGGEST SO. I'VE SEEN SOME COMMENT TO THE CONTRARY. WE HAVE HAD A WORKING GROUP MONITORING THIS SITUATION SINCE THE 19TH OF MAY ON A 24-HOUR BASIS. WE HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING IT VERY, VERY CLOSELY. I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING IT PERSONALLY VERY CLOSELY FOR THE PAST WEEK, OR SINCE LAST SATURDAY MORNING, IN ANY EVENT, WHEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES BEGAN TO GO IN THE DIRECTION THEY WERE MOVING IN.

I HAVE BEEN IN VERY FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THE PRESIDENT BY TELEPHONE AND IN PERSON ON EACH DAY SINCE THEN. OUR EMBASSY HAS -- WHEN THE VIOLENCE BEGAN TO Erupt ON SATURDAY, OUR EMBASSY SENT SOME OF OUR OFFICERS AT SOME PERSONAL RISK TO THESE DIPLOMATS, IF I MIGHT SAY SO, INTO THE SQUARE TO ADVISE AMERICANS TO LEAVE. WE SENT THEM TO THE CAMPUSES AND INTO TOWN TO SUGGEST THAT THEY GIVE CONSIDERATION TO LEAVING.

WE HAVE PROVIDED FOR AIR TRANSPORTATION THROUGH CONTACT

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